

Applicant : Gary B. Cohen, et al.
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Attorney's Docket No.: 07844-511001 / P460

REMARKS

Claims 1-40 are pending. Claims 1, 13, 14, 20, 26, 30, 39, and 40 have been amended herein. Claims 1, 20, 26, 30, and 40 are independent claims. Claims 26-29 and 40 have been allowed and claims 24 and 25 have been objected to.

Drawings

With regard to the comments in Section 1 of the Office Action, as confirmed by an informal telephone conference with this office and the Examiner, the objection was intended to cover the photographs in Figs. 3A, 3D and 5 (which provide an aerial view of a building). As image 312 is included simply to provide an example application window 300, and is not material to the claimed subject matter, it is respectfully submitted that no modifications are required to this aspect of the drawings.

Declaration / Oath

With regard to the comments in Section 2 of the Office Action, a replacement declaration/oath executed by all of the inventors is in the process of being executed by the inventors that clearly covers all sections of 37 CFR 1.56 (and will be forwarded shortly).

Title

With regard to the comments in Section 3 of the Office Action, it is respectfully submitted that the title, as originally submitted, is sufficiently descriptive of the claimed subject matter and complies with 37 CFR 1.72 in that it is as short and descriptive as possible. While the proposed title amendment is appreciated, it is believed that it is overly limiting considering the varying coverage of the claim submitted herewith.

35 USC § 101

With regard to the comments in Section 5 of the Office Action, the claims have been amended in a fashion similar to that proposed in order to clarify that the computer software application is stored on a computer readable medium and executable on a computer.

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35 USC § 102

Claims 1-23 and 30-39 stand rejected under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by a document entitled "Apple Guide Complete: Designing and Developing Onscreen Assistance" ("Apple"). It is noted that the provided copy of this reference omits almost all figures accompanying the text.

The disclosed subject matter relates to the generation of one or more help files that specify content to be displayed and at least one interactive link. The content is associated with at least one user-activated step to take in connection with a help topic. When the interactive link is activated an operation in the computer software application is performed to effect the at least one step associated with the specified content.

With regard to claims 1 and 30, Apple generally describes the construction of new help files and the conversion of Windows-based help files to the Apple operating system. Page 2-70 and page 10-57 are cited as disclosing interactive links. In these pages, two main type of buttons are described, navigation buttons which are used to take a user to different parts of the guide file, and content area buttons that are associated with an event or navigation route specific to a panel. While there is some reference to the association of events with such buttons, Apple does not disclose or suggest, inter alia, that the button performs at least one step typically implemented in connection with a help topic. It is with the method of claim 1 and the machine-readable instructions of claim 30 that a user via the interactive link may cause the application to conduct one of the steps associated with a help topic that would otherwise require action by the user. Such an arrangement provides a significant improvement over conventional help file techniques, which simply illustrate (with screen shots and the like) steps that relate to a certain help topic.

Accordingly, independent claims 1 and 30 and those dependent thereon are allowable.

With regard to claim 9, Apple does not provide or suggest that a new listing of help topics be generated based on help files that were located external to the local file structure (e.g.,

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the application folder of Apple). The passages cited in Apple simply refer to a structure similar to a table of contents in which a broad list of topic categories with sub-categories is described without describing how such lists are constructed. It is with the method of claim 9 that a greater number of help topics may be readily made available that are contained within help files external to a local file structure.

Therefore, claim 9 is separately allowable.

With regard to claims 10 and 35, Apple also does not provide or suggest that a table of contents be generated based on help files that were located external to the local file structure (e.g., the application folder of Apple). Again, the passages cited in Apple simply refer to a structure similar to a table of contents in which a broad list of topic categories with sub-categories is described. The reference is silent as to how such lists are constructed. It is with the subject matter of claims 10 and 35 that a greater number of help files may be readily made available in a single list that includes help files external to a local file structure.

Accordingly, claims 10 and 35 are separately allowable.

With regard to claims 13 and 39, the panels of pages 2-35 to 2-65 of Apple relate to sequential panels that may be used in connection with a help topic. These panels are simply sequential windows that illustrate steps or other information pertinent to a help topic. While such panels may be customizable (by the author of a help file), they do not allow an author (nor suggest that an author be allowed) to record a sequence of user activities (e.g., a macro) that would be performed in the software application upon activation of the interactive link.

Therefore, claims 13 and 39 are separately allowable.

With regard to claim 14, Apple does not disclose or suggest the use of a hyperlink or hotspot (and this is impliedly acknowledged by the rejection focusing on the deleted "graphical button" feature). Such hyperlinks or hotspots provide one variation for implementing the steps

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associated with a help topic that can act to decrease the amount of code and steps necessary within a help file.

Accordingly, claim 14 is separately allowable.

With regard to claim 17, the cited Apple passage does not suggest or disclose that the actions taken by the interactive link correspond to a menu item. Rather, Apple describes the generation of a help file that can explain the various functions of a menu item.

Therefore, claim 17 is separately allowable.

With regard to claim 18, the cited Apple passages do not suggest or disclose that the actions taken by the interactive link correspond to an operation through an API. Rather, Apple describes the use of hotspots within a help file that take certain actions. There is no suggestion that these actions take place within the software application and relate to user-activated steps.

Accordingly, claim 18 is separately allowable.

With regard to claim 20, Apple discusses the creation of various panels that may be sequence to provide an illustration or other information associated with a help topic. It fails to disclose or suggest that the help file that includes an interactive link that automatically conducts user-activated operations previously recorded by an author within a software program. Rather, Apple simply shows a user how to manually conduct the user-activated operations through one or more panels.

Therefore, claim 20 and those dependent thereon are allowable.

Comments Regarding Allowability

While the undersigned agrees with the finding of allowability of claims 26-29, 40, and the provisional allowability of claims 23-25 if rewritten to contain all limitations of the

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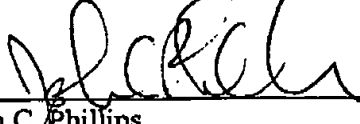
corresponding base claim and any intervening claims, it is submitted that some of the reasoning in support thereof does not fully appreciate the differences between the current claims and the cited art. In particular, as described above, one of the main improvements permitted by the claimed subject matter is to allow a user, when accessing a help file, to cause an action (that would otherwise required some action on the part of the user) to occur related to the help topic. Providing such an interactive system is not disclosed in or suggest by the cited art – which relates to different techniques of providing information regarding a help topic (as compared to implementing user-activated steps relating to the help topic).

The foregoing comments made with respect to positions taken by the Examiner are not to be construed as acquiescence by the applicant with other positions of the Examiner that have not been explicitly contested. Accordingly, applicant's arguments for patentability of a claim should not be construed as implying that there are not other good reasons for patentability of that claim or other claims.

It is believed that the amendments herein now put the application in condition for allowance. If there are any outstanding issues, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned if the Examiner believes that would expedite this matter.

Please apply any necessary charges or credits to deposit account 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,



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